



# Rockport Millbrook Meadow Committee

P.O. Box 51, Rockport, MA 01966

[www.millbrookmeadow.org](http://www.millbrookmeadow.org)

*Charmaine Blanchard  
Laura Hallowell  
Richard Lorigan  
Aileen Morrissey  
Stephanie Woolf*

*Samuel W. Coulbourn, Chair  
Marcia Lombardo, Treasurer  
Shannon Mason, Vice Chair  
Barbara Sparks*

## Annual Report for 2019



*After two years, Rockport celebrated re-opening of Restored Millbrook Meadow in August. Here Sen. Bruce Tarr, Selectmen, DPW Director Joseph Parisi and Millbrook Meadow Committee cut the ribbon. Photo by Adriane Schulz.*

**The year 2019.** After seven years and nearly \$1,600,000, Rockport's Millbrook Meadow and Mill Pond are restored.

When the new dam was completed in 2012, Millbrook Meadow Committee and Rockport Garden Club members looked at the beautiful new dam, and saw a Pond clogged with sediment and cattails and a Meadow given to frequent flooding, with aging, broken trees and jumbled

stones in the stream. For a **History of the Meadow and Pond** see <https://www.millbrookmeadow.org/about-us>

In 2018 dredging and restoration of the Mill Pond and Frog Pond were completed and work started on restoration of the Meadow.

All during the winter of 2018-2019 SumCo Environmental of Salem MA., the same contractor that had done the dredging, built a new wingwall to guide Mill Brook's water beneath Beach Street, and carved out a new, slightly sinuous course for the brook. They completely recontoured the Meadow, installed water lines for watering all the plants in the Meadow, a drinking fountain with a special fountain for dogs, electrical service, and hundreds of plants and trees. They built a beautiful new Native Shade Garden on the bank from King Street down to the Frog Pond, and finally they installed a new playground with double climbing towers and stainless-steel slides, and a 6000-lb. whale carved from Rockport granite, a sculpture for play

Following all their work, Rockport's Department of Public Works installed six new park benches. All during this two-year restoration, the work of **Joe Parisi**, Director of DPW, and their excellent coordination with the contractors, has been nothing short of marvelous. **Laura Hallowell** of our Committee has been our hard-working liaison throughout.

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*View of new Native Shade Garden at Frog Pond, with Lura's Steps at right. Garden is in memory of Barbara Beyea of Rockport.*





*View of newly-built Mill Brook looking toward the Atlantic.*

**World Fish Migration Day** was held on the Mill Dam in April, with **Eric Hutchins**, NOAA Marine Biologist and Millbrook’s environmental adviser. He showed children eels and turtles and explained the elaborate migration of eels.

**Playground.** On July 12<sup>th</sup>, with the Meadow restoration nearing completion, we held a “soft opening” of the playground and the granite whale. Donors of the new playground helped with the ribbon cutting.

**Re-Opening.** On August 17<sup>th</sup>, **State Senator Bruce Tarr** and Rockport Selectmen helped Millbrook Meadow Committee members and **Gunilla Caulfield** cut the ribbon marking the re-opening of the Meadow and Pond after two years of restoration. Immediately after the opening came the Duck Race. Friends of the Council on Aging delayed their annual rubber duck race in the Mill Brook until August since the brook was still under construction on their usual June date.

**Wreath Sale.** In November Millbrook Meadow Committee (MMC) held its fourth annual wreath sale to raise funds for maintenance of the restored Meadow.



Children enjoy the new Meadow playground. *Photo by Adriane Schulz.*

**Millbrook Membership:** Members of Millbrook Meadow are **Charmaine Blanchard Esq.**, Laura Hallowell, **Rich Lorigan**, **Marcia Lombardo**, **Shannon Mason**, **Aileen Morrissey**, **Barbara Sparks**, **Stephanie Woolf** and **Sam Coulbourn**. Sam continued as chair, Shannon as vice-chair, and Marcia as treasurer.

Shannon has been a splendid organizer, including her husband, **Darren Mason**, and a host of volunteers for fund raising in many shapes and sizes, including annual Motif No. 1 Day and Harvest Fest booths, Wreath Sales, mail campaigns and mass communication via email and internet.

Marcia has been a diligent and tireless treasurer, working with our charity sponsor and town government to ensure correct payment of bills and accountability. In 2019 she created a Rockport calendar for raising funds.

Laura Hallowell, who has served as an expert adviser on planting, and has led the project to eliminate invasive plant species in the park has done a marvelous job tracking myriad details of this restoration project in her role as Project Manager and Liaison since April 2014. This has involved many hours of trekking through the Meadow while it was under construction.

Barbara Sparks, who has been a leader in all aspects of the restoration since 2012, has continued as chairman of the “Arts + Play” subcommittee, ensuring that the new playground and “Millie” the whale were blended smoothly into the finished Meadow.

Aileen Morrissey has brought her local knowledge to the fore and been a tireless volunteer for fund raisers, Meadow cleanups and many hours of watering for the hundreds of new plants and grass.

Charmaine Blanchard, Rich Lorigan and Stephanie Woolf have also contributed to this restoration in many ways. Stephanie has combined her role as head of the Town Beautification Committee to advise MMC on installation of park furniture and other amenities, and Rich has begun a project to develop a Meadow history pictorial booklet as a fund raiser.

**Meadow Advisers:** Eric Hutchins, a marine biologist with NOAA who has worked with MMC for decades, and led recent relocations of wildlife for each phase of our restoration, is our environmental adviser; Gunilla Caulfield, Trustee of the Lura Hall Phillips Fund which was instrumental in starting the restoration, has been a loyal adviser; **Frank Hassler**, a long-time head of the Finance Committee has advised on municipal finance; **John P. Campbell, AIA**, experienced in recently completing the Community House project for the Town has advised us; **Denise Donnelly**, Selectwoman, is our communications adviser; **Jamy Madeja, Esq.** is our environmental law adviser; **Randy Saville** is our history adviser, working with **William Tobin**, legislative liaison, to apply for national historic park designation. **Tom Mikus**, formerly an executive with Exxon Research working on carbon capture and other solutions to global warming, is our science and technology adviser. Selectman **Don Campbell** is liaison with the Board of Selectmen. **Heidi Caswell Zander**, President of Rockport Art Association & Museum, is our art adviser.

**Chris DeRosa**, landscape designer and horticulturist, continued to contribute as landscape adviser. **Debby Coulter**, a wildlife activist who has taken on the role of an “explainer” of the wildlife at the Pond for visitors, is a nature adviser; **Jane Beddus**, an abutter to the Pond, has taken on the role of providing “Pond News” on a whiteboard for visitors. **Neil Emond** is also a nature adviser.

**Conservancy.** Since Millbrook Meadow Committee, as a town government entity, could not serve as fund raiser, the Committee created a board for the Rockport Millbrook Meadow Conservancy. This Conservancy is an independent organization, qualified to solicit donations. The Conservancy Board works closely with Millbrook Meadow Committee to provide their individual experience and expertise in the Restoration project, associated fund raising, and stewardship of the park in the future.

Members of the Board are **Dianne Anderson**, **Tim Corrigan**, **Chester Clark**, **Karl Norwood**, **Maura Wadlinger**, Barbara Sparks, and Sam Coulbourn. **Wally Hess** is a Conservancy adviser.

**Fund-Raising and Outreach Committee.** Shannon Mason has continued as chair of the Restoration Fund Raising and Outreach subcommittee, with Charmaine Blanchard and Sam Coulbourn as members, as well as Maura Wadlinger of the Conservancy Board. Advisers are **Susan J. Gray**, past president of Rockport Chamber Music Festival and veteran board member of Rockport Music; and **Betsy Giannoccaro**, formerly fund raiser and grants coordinator for Rockport Music. The subcommittee has arranged for Essex County Community Foundation (ECCF), a tax-exempt organization qualified to accept tax deductible contributions, to receive donations. **Laurie Ann LePine** is our web adviser.

We were saddened at the death of **Paul Makowski**, a fund-raising adviser for the Conservancy, on April 26.



“Millie” the Rockport granite Whale has become a popular addition to the Meadow

#### **Fund Raising in 2019:**

**Wreaths.** For the fourth year the Conservancy gathered a group of skilled artists to make Christmas wreaths, with \$100 from each wreath going to our Meadow Sustainability Fund. **Shannon Mason** led the project. **Terry Duffy** again volunteered the use of his greenhouse for the wreath makers,

**Rockport Calendars.** Marcia Lombardo created calendars with favorite Rockport scenes for each month and sold them as a fundraiser for the Meadow.

Rich Lorigan is leading an effort to create a booklet depicting the History of Meadow & Pond in pictures and words, for a fund raiser. He is assisted by Randy Saville, Tom Mikus, **Susan Levine, Rae Francoeur** and **Sandy Lorigan**.

Since we began fundraising in 2013, we have gathered a little over \$570,000 in private donations. A listing of all donors is located on the Conservancy web site at

<http://www.millbrookmeadow.org/giving>





*Shannon Mason led the fourth annual wreath sale to raise money for the Meadow. At right is volunteer Gaynelle Weiss.*

**Plan for 2020.** In the next few months we plan a Public Meeting to discuss the Meadow and its planting plan with Rockporters. Although the newly restored Meadow and Pond have gained hundreds of new trees, shrubs and plants, there is need for more shade trees and the Conservancy will hear the thoughts of local Meadow visitors and volunteers.

**Border Planting.** Begun in 2019, planting of trees, shrubs and ferns along the border with the Peg Leg parking lot will be completed in the spring of 2020.

**Long Stone Sitting Wall:** Barbara Sparks is working with Chris DeRosa, Meadow Landscape Adviser, to create a Long Stone Sitting Wall, 20 feet in length, to be built of Rockport granite and fieldstone on the rise below the dam, where visitors can spread out a picnic and watch children playing nearby, or view the Atlantic in the distance.

**Maintenance Funding.** The Committee will seek adequate Town budget funding for routine maintenance of the Meadow and Pond.

**Thanks to Rockporters,** our Meadow and Pond are restored. We appreciate all your support, in sharing your ideas, in volunteering on cleanups, voting at Town Meetings, donating money, and all the other things you have done these past years! Work in the Meadow and around the Pond is never finished, though, and so we hope you'll stay with us as volunteers and donors. Enjoy your park!

Samuel W. Coulbourn,  
Chairman